

JUNE 1965

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A Citizen at the White House

by MILTON MAYER

CPYRGHT

I WENT to the White House the other day to tell the President how to run the country. If I thought that he knew how to do it, you may believe me that I should not have gone, for he and I are both busy men.

But the President is not a man like (or even unlike) me (or you). The President is a Table of Organization. The trick is to run through the Table of Organization and find out just where to move in. I wanted to move in on Vietnam.

The first thing I learned about the Table *in re* Vietnam was that I did not want to see Dean Rusk. Nobody does. Mr. Rusk is a dead duck, and is just waiting for Medicare so that he, like the rest of us, can take it easy on the Western Slope.

The man who is said to be steering the President wrong on Vietnam is named McGeorge Bundy, and many's the clodhopper who goes to see Mc-

George Bundy about Vietnam without ever discovering that McGeorge Bundy is steering the President wrong because he, McGeorge Bundy, is being steered wrong. The four-million-dollar-a-day question—that's what we are now said to be spending to kill the Vietnamese—is: Who is steering McGeorge Bundy wrong?

My overcover agents informed me that it is Mr. Cooper, and to him, in the White House, I went.

We had never heard of each other, any more than either of us, six months ago, had ever heard of Mr. Quat, the Chief of State of South Vietnam, who Mr. Cooper says really represents the people of that happy land. By the time this is printed, it may be Mr. Kumquat who represents the people, and Mr. Cooper and I will both have forgotten Mr. Quat as well as each other.

Mr. Cooper, when we met, confessed some competence in the matter of Vietnam. His title seems to be Special Assistant to the President, or maybe Consultant. But don't be impressed—by him or by me. Everybody in the place, and it is a big place, seemed to be a Special Assistant to the President except the towel man.

Maybe it is the towel man who is

MILTON MAYER, author and lecturer, is now on his way to Europe for six months of writing and study. His articles have appeared in many publications and have won him the George Polk Memorial Award and the Benjamin Franklin Citation for Journalism. His most recent book is "What Can a Man Do?"

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